(a) whether it is a fact that according to Human Development Report, 2003, India is the home to the largest number of hungry people; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken by Government to turn India into a hunger free country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) According to the Human Development Report 2003, India is home to the largest number of hungry people (around 22% of India's population). However, as per the information from National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO), the percentage of households where all members did not get enough food everyday throughout the year was only 3.8% in rural areas and 1.4% in urban areas for the year 1999-2000.

(b) It has been the constant endeavour of the Government to strengthen various programmes to tackle the problem of poverty and food and nutritional security at the household level. This is sought to be achieved through the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) under which foodgrains are provided to the poor at half the economic cost, and the Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY), under which 2.5 crore families are provided foodgrains at highly subsidized rates. In addition, there are food based schemes which also address nutritional security. These include the Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY), National Food for Work Programme (NFFWP), Mid Day Meal scheme and provision of nutritional supplements to pre school children through the ICDS system.

Central assistance to Uttar Pradesh

†1199. SHRI BHAGWATI SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh had made a request to the Hon'ble Prime Minister for the grant for Central assistance amounting to Rs. 18230.00 crores for the schemes of various sectors in the State through a special economic package for the development of the State;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when the Central assistance in the form of a special economic package for the development of the State is likely to be provided?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) to (c) The Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh,

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

in a letter dated 12.6.2004 addressed to Prime Minister, requested for one time Special Economic Package of Rs. 18,230 crores. Assistance for various sectors was requested partly as one time release and also in a phased manner.

The issue was examined and a reply was sent to the Chief Minister on 30th September, 2004.

Allocations to States are made through the Annual Plans. The size of the annual Plan 2005-06 of Uttar Pradesh was approved at Rs. 13,500.00 crores, keeping in view the estimated States' own resources and Central assistance, as compared to the approved Annual Plan 2004-05 of Rs. 9,661.51 crores.

Working of Common Minimum Programme

1200. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Prime Minister in his recent annual appraisal of the working of the Common Minimum Programme stressed the need for making the National Development Council more effective to build a consensus on fiscal health of the State Governments;

(b) if so, the Prime Minister's appraisal about the effectiveness of the National Development Council; and

(c) the steps that have since been taken to make the council more effective and with what success?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) to (c) National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP) stresses the need to make the National Development Council (NDC) a more effective instrument of cooperative federalism. The Government is committed to enhancing the effectivness of the National Development Council as a forum for coordination in respect of policies, strategies and activities of Central and State Governments for the overall social and economic development of the country. At the 51st meeting of the NDC held on 27th and 28th June, 2005, Chief Ministers of States gave their considered views regarding the comments made in the Mid-Term Appraisal of the Tenth Five Year Plan covering the gamut of national developmental issues, with particular focus on agriculture, irrigation and water management, health and education, employment programmes and governance, infrastructure development and State finances and resources.